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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 21, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for August 21, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

OZGUR GUNDEM: Although the Agri Governor's Office announced that the explosion on the natural gas pipeline of BOTAS (Turkish Pipeline Corporation) in Agri's Taslicay Township on Saturday (08/19) was sabotage of the PKK, the daily reported that the PKK had not claimed responsibility yet.

RADIKAL / ZAMAN: The PKK reportedly carried out the attack on the BOTAS pipeline in Agri by placing C-4 and A-4 plastic explosives on four points which are two meters away from each other. The explosion blew up a 200-meter section of the pipeline, and 8 million cubic meters of natural gas worth 3.5 million YTL was burned out. The repair work will be completed and shipment of natural gas reportedly will resume tomorrow. Zaman daily pointed out that six sabotage attempts targeting pipelines had occurred in seven months.

ZAMAN: A captain was seriously wounded during a conflict that broke out between security forces and PKK terrorists in Mardin's Nusaybin district.

HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Ten thousand Syrians, who went from Turkey to Germany for different reasons and who sought asylum there, are now facing the risk of being deported. A Syrian clergyman reportedly said that Syrians were given residence permits in Germany on the condition that they would return when peaceful conditions prevail in Turkey. For that reason, the German government is now considering sending back the Syrians to their country.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Chief Prosecutor's Office in Sanliurfa started an investigation against eight people who denounced in a July 14 press announcement the alleged execution of a PKK member by the Turkish security forces after catching the militant in Batman's Besiri district (see press summary). Those eight people are members of civil society organizations such as local chapter of Human Rights Association, Mazlum-Der (Solidarity Association for Oppressed People), DTP (Democratic Society Party), and Egitim-Sen (Teacher's Union). The Prosecutor reportedly started the investigation because of the title of the press announcement, which said, 'Turkey's point of view: Kurds deserve all kinds of violence.'

EVRENSEL: During a festival held in Tunceli's Pulumur

district, Sinan Yerlikaya, Tunceli deputy from CHP (Republican People's Party), made a call to the PKK to lay down arms. Yerlikaya said that unless the PKK laid down arms in the first place, a general amnesty for the PKK militants would never be declared.

EVRENSEL: German authorities arrested two Kurdish politicians in Germany on grounds that those people were members of Kongra-Gel. Federation of Kurdish Associations, in order to protest that new development, decided to shut down 65 Kurdish associations in Germany for one week starting from today.

RADIKAL: The allegations that the waste material of Incirlik Airbase, such as jet fuel wastes, some chemical and solid wastes, were being discharged to the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers in Adana have been dismissed by American officials. (This summary is from 08/18 edition.)

REID